

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes \_\_\_\_\_  
no \_\_\_\_\_

Property Name: Cornwell Property Inventory Number: BA-3136  
Address: 5803 East Avenue Historic district: yes ☒ no  
City: Baltimore Zip Code: 21206 County: Baltimore County  
USGS Quadrangle(s): Baltimore East  
Property Owner: Stephen M. Cornwell Tax Account ID Number: 1408032476  
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 23 Tax Map Number: 81  
Project: Section 100: I-95, I-895(N) Split to North of MD 43 Agency: Maryland Transportation Authority  
Agency Prepared By: A.D. Marble & Company  
Preparer's Name: Stephanie Foell Date Prepared: 12/1/2003  
Documentation is presented in: See Key References List  
Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: \_\_\_\_\_ Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended  
Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G  
*Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:*  
Name of the District/Property: \_\_\_\_\_  
Inventory Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Eligible: yes Listed: yes  
visit by MHT Staf yes ☒ no Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

**Architectural Description**

The residence at 5803 East Avenue is an American-Foursquare house. It is essentially symmetrical except for its slightly off-center entrance, which contains a replacement storm door, and its adjacent window. The building, which has a square footprint sits atop a raised, quarry-faced, concrete-block foundation and is clad in vinyl siding. The first story of the front (west) elevation contains a full-width, hipped-roof porch with Ionic-column supports which sit atop piers constructed of quarry-faced, concrete blocks. The crawlspace beneath the porch has been enclosed with concrete. The porch is reached by a small flight of concrete stairs and is enclosed by a balustrade of simple, squared, wooden members.

Windows throughout the residence are one-over-one, double-hung sash and are flanked by nonfunctional shutters. The pyramidal roof is covered with asphalt shingles and a hipped-roof dormer is found on each elevation. Windows in each dormer are of the same one-over-one configuration and are hung in pairs. A cantilevered, shed-roof bay protrudes from the north elevation.

The grounds of 5803 East contain scattered foundation plantings and several new-growth trees.

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_ Eligibility not recommended ☒  
Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G  
MHT Comments:

Tom Tanenbaum ✓  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

Mark  
Reviewer, National Register Program

6/14/04

Date

6/15/04  
Date

200401247

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## History/Significance

## General Regional History

5803 East Avenue is located in northeastern Baltimore County in the Rosedale neighborhood, which derives its name from William T. Smith's nearby nineteenth-century plantation of that name as shown on Griffith Morgan Hopkins' 1877 Atlas of Baltimore County, Map of the 12th District. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, much of the area developed as a result of its proximity to Philadelphia Road, a major thoroughfare within the region. From the early years of settlement into the twentieth century, much of the land of this portion of Baltimore County was involved in small-scale farming. After World War II, the growing suburbanization of the Baltimore region reached Rosedale and much of the farmland was subdivided into smaller lots. Many post-War neighborhoods containing small residences are concentrated in this part of Baltimore County.

## Philadelphia Road

The area of Baltimore County that is now Rosedale developed largely as a result of its proximity to Philadelphia Road/Maryland Route 7, a road that originated as a Native American trail (Brooks and Rockel 1979:134). In 1729, the City of Baltimore was platted as a future port and commerce center. During that time, surveyors laid out the Philadelphia Road, linking Philadelphia, the New World's largest port city, with points south and west, including Baltimore.

The roadway's importance grew over time as interstate commerce became more prevalent. By the 1740s, commercial thoroughfares were being constructed to move farm produce, mill products, lime and iron castings to the port city of Baltimore, and taverns and hotels sprang up along the Philadelphia Road. After several attempts to establish a turnpike, in 1814, the Baltimore and Havre de Grace Turnpike Company received a charter to construct a toll road on the bed of the Philadelphia Road. The turnpike company initially enjoyed a period of prosperity. However, after only 20 years, railroads began offering intense competition (Hollifield 1978:81-82).

As Baltimore continued its expansion eastward, portions of the turnpike were ceded to the city. In 1888, Harford County assumed control of the turnpike contained within its boundaries. The end of the turnpike came in 1894, when Baltimore County assumed control of the remaining roadway within its jurisdiction.

During the twentieth century, traffic continued to increase on Philadelphia Road, particularly when automobiles became prevalent. Businesses arose along the former turnpike to serve the traveling public and many thought the road would continue to be the favored route for those traveling between Philadelphia and points south. However, in the late 1930s, the state held discussions regarding Works Progress Administration funds available for highway construction. A decision was made either to improve the existing Philadelphia Road, by then designated as Maryland Route 7, or construct a new roadway parallel to the old one. The businesses along the existing route fought to retain their source of business, but constructing a new, parallel road became the final decision, and work commenced on the new road, the Pulaski Highway, which eventually replaced Philadelphia Road as the primary thoroughfare through the area.

## Agricultural Development in Northeastern Baltimore County

European settlement of northeastern Baltimore County likely began circa 1660. Because of the costly and complex land grant process, many wealthy landowners purchased parcels of land in Baltimore County, viewing these holdings as either investments in the future or potential bequests for heirs. Even land that had been purchased remained vacant (Marks 2000:7).

Consequently, during the early eighteenth century, land patterns consisted of small settlements, trails, and wilderness. Small-scale farmers, woodcutters, and miners were the primary residents, not the structured society of the southern Maryland gentry. This trend continued into later centuries as farmers continued to cultivate smaller plots of land than their Southern, plantation-owning counterparts (Marks 2000:11).

## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria:    A    B    C    D Considerations:    A    B    C    D    E    F    G

MHT Comments:

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Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services\_\_\_\_\_  
Date\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, National Register Program\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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osedale was originally part of an agricultural region. By the mid-nineteenth century, many landowning residents of Baltimore County were either German, Polish, or Irish immigrants. Generally, farms were small in size and produced relatively minor amounts of what were known as "stoop crops," vegetables which required bending over to harvest. These included carrots, parsnips, beans, etc. These crops were either sold at markets throughout Baltimore City (usually the Belair Market, the closest to the area) or by the farmers themselves, a practice known as truck farming which was prevalent throughout the area. Also at this time, as greenhouses came into widespread use, this area of Baltimore County became an important center for the production of year-round cut flowers for weddings, funerals, and bouquets (McGrain 1990:17).

#### The American Foursquare

Residences, often simple I-house or American-Foursquare forms, were commonly constructed as the farmhouses or tenant-farmer residences for many small-scale farms throughout Maryland. American Foursquares were also an early suburban house form.

Essentially a subtype of the Prairie style of building, American Foursquares commonly have hipped or pyramidal roofs, and are symmetrical, although entrances, which are located on the front façades, may be off center. This was one of the earliest forms of Prairie-style architecture and was the most common vernacular version. Vernacular examples such as 5803 East Avenue often feature hipped dormers and single-story, full-width porches (McAlester and McAlester 1984:439).

#### Determination of Eligibility

Constructed in 1924, the residence at 5803 East Avenue is a vernacular example of an American Foursquare.

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. that are associated with the lives of significant persons in our past; or
- C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. that have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

5803 East Avenue is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Under Criterion A, it is not associated with any events that impacted American history. Preliminary research did not uncover any associations with significant people, making it ineligible under Criterion B. Under Criterion C, 5803 East Avenue is not a significant example of an American-Foursquare residence. Although it still successfully conveys its original building form, it does not display all of the hallmarks of the style which would make it eligible as an example of an American Foursquare, and the installation of replacement windows and the application of siding compromise its overall integrity. There are numerous other examples of American Foursquares within Baltimore County, some of which retain their original settings on farms or which are grouped in planned suburban neighborhoods. The property was not evaluated for significance under Criterion D.

#### Key References

Bromley, George W. and Walter A.  
1915 Atlas of Baltimore County Maryland. G.W. Bromley & Company. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

#### MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria:    A    B    C    D    Considerations:    A    B    C    D    E    F    G

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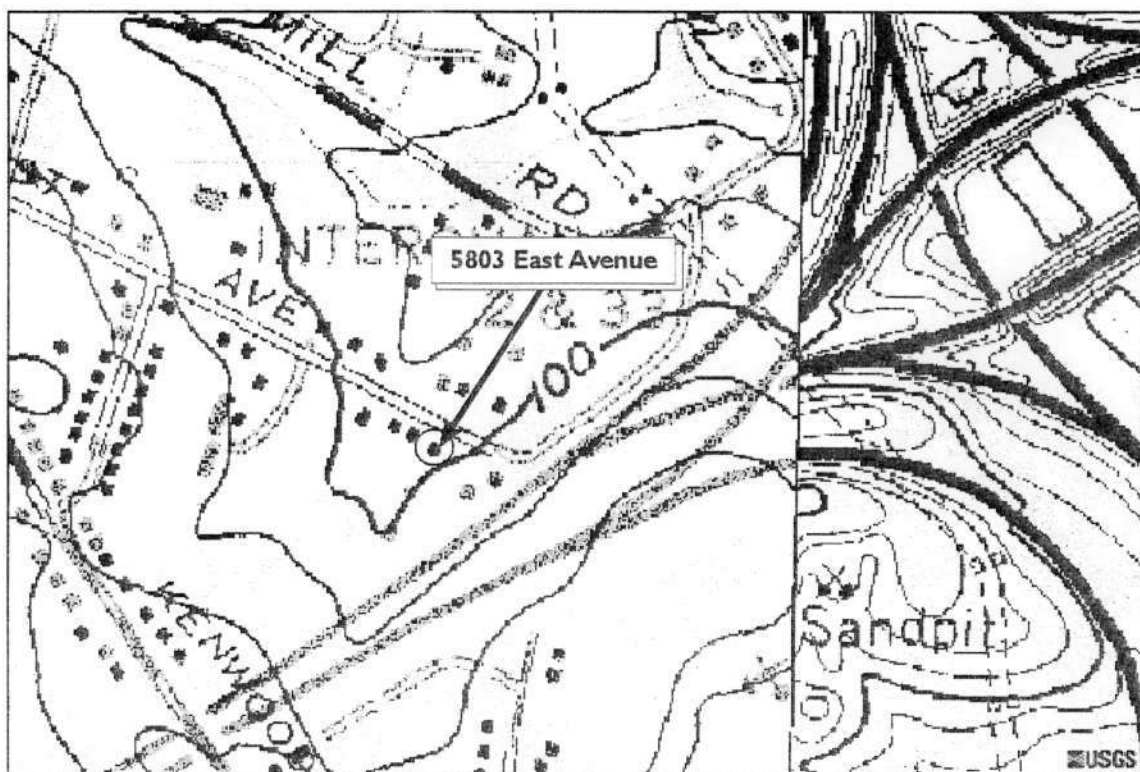
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**Resource Location Map****Section 100: I-95, I-895 (N) Split to North of MD 43**

Baltimore County, Maryland



P.TMC

*Map Source: USGS Topographic Quadrangle, Baltimore East, MD*